INSECTARY
NS Dept. of Natural Resources

Insectary Notes

July/August 2009

From the Editor

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September and October are always months when we're out and about: working on insect/disease surveys and outreach activities. This year is no exception, so we've decided to highlight some of the quickly approaching events.

The very first NS Department of Natural Resources Open House will take place on 19 September. Forest Health will be taking part and we invite everyone to come and enjoy the day.

Another first is the NS Forest Health Conference, slated for 23 & 24 February 2010. Risk Services and Forest Health are in the planning stages for this event. We'll keep you up-to-date on the program and how you can register to attend.

And we can't forget the annual Woodlot Owner of the Year celebrations. This year, we celebrate 20 years of this important award, recognizing those who demonstrate outstanding achievements in woodlot management.

'Til next time,

Jacqui

Editing . . . a Rewording Activity

Say What and Quotes . . .

After your hands become coated with grease, your nose will begin to itch. -Lorenz's Law of Mechanical Repair

Nothing is as inevitable as a mistake whose time has come. -Tussman's Law

Machines should work. People should think. -IBM's Pollyanna Principle

Identical parts aren't. -Beach's Law

The first rule of intelligent tinkering is to save all the parts. -Ehrlich's Law

It is a mistake to allow any mechanical object to realize that you are in a hurry. -Ralph's Observation

The newer the carpet, the greater the likelihood that the bread will land jelly side down. -Law of Inevitable Consequences.

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Focus

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The Department of Natural Resources Open House 2009

Come and spend a day with the Department of Natural Resources

When:
19 September 2009
10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Where:
NS Department of Natural Resources
Shubenacadie Complex (Provincial Wildlife Park)

There will be a mix of staffed exhibits, active demonstrations, presentations and self-guided tours. Several 10-minute presentations will take place during each day at the Creighton Environmental Centre. Active displays will be scheduled periodically at various locations on the site.

For more information and directions, visit the NS Natural Resources website.

Be sure to include a stop at the Forest Health display, located at the side entrance to the Forest Protection Headquarters.

- Join a scheduled Bug Walk
- Bring in an insect and "Ask the Entomologist"
- Check out the information & presentations on Forest Health projects

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Woodlot Owner of the Year Field Days

You can also see Forest Health displays at the annual Woodlot Owner of the Year Field Days in September and October.

The 2009 Woodlot Owner of the Year Award will be presented to the Veinot family at a public field tour on their woodlot on 3 October, during the annual Lunenburg County Christmas Tree Producers tour.

Other regional winners are: Brian Archibald and family of Aspen, Guysborough Co. (Field Day on 12 September) and George and Phillis Cook of Truro, Colchester Co. (Field Day on 26 September.)

For more information on the Field Days and regional winners visit:

http://www.gov.ns.ca/natr/woodlot/woya/

Provincial Entomologist's Overview . . What's the Buzz?

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And what is the buzz, you ask??? Well, it's the . . .

Nova Scotia Forest Health Conference!

I am pleased to announce the Nova Scotia Forest Health Conference (NSFHC) which will take place from February 23 - 24, 2010 at the Holiday Inn in Truro, Nova Scotia. Brought to you by Risk Services with collaboration from Forest Health, the NSFHC is the first of it's kind for our Forest Protection Division!

Not only will you be delighted with the forest health issues concerning Nova Scotia from a forest insect and disease perspective, you can attend presentations on:

❖ *Socioeconomic Impacts* ❖
❖ *National Forest Pest Strategy* ❖
❖ *Urban Forestry* ❖
❖ *Climate Change* ❖
❖ *The Environment* ❖
❖ *The Future* ❖

We bring you an opening mixer on the evening of February 22, 2010 followed by the conference on February 23 -24, 2010. Our website will be up and running in October and preregistration will be appreciated. Stay tuned for further updates as our program is still under construction!

Until Next Time,

Chrissy

Chrissy Campbell
Science Officer, Pest Management

Mark your calendars and keep an eye out early in October for our website.
Nova Scotia Forest Health Conference
23-24 February 2010
Truro, Nova Scotia

Contact Chrissy Campbell for further information
(902) 758 - 7238
campbecs@gov.ns.ca

Focus Index . . . . . July 1993-July 2009

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Another year gone by and it's time for the annual index of *Focus* articles.
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FORBIDDEN Library Titles For Children

- ✗ Gerbil merry-go round, and other great microwave games.
- ✗ Fifty new places to poke a pencil.
- ✗ Children's guide to hitch-hiking.
- ✗ Advanced screaming, crying and whingeing.
- ✗ How to avoid washing daddy's car.

From the email bag . . .

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Stink Bugs

Jeff Ogden

Also known as Shield Bugs, this group comes about its name(s) honestly. Anyone who has ever picked up one of these "true" bugs can quickly see how the back looks very much like a medieval knight's shield. And if held too long or the little fella gets a bit nervous, you will also see, or in this case smell, why it got its other name: stink bug. This strong odour is a form of defence to warn predators not to eat them.

Members of the stink bug family feed in one of two methods: they are either phytophagous (feeding on plant juices) or predators. Depending on what or who they are feeding on, they can be considered beneficial or a pest. However they rarely cause any major damage even if they do choose to feed on the occasional beneficial insects or non-weed plant.

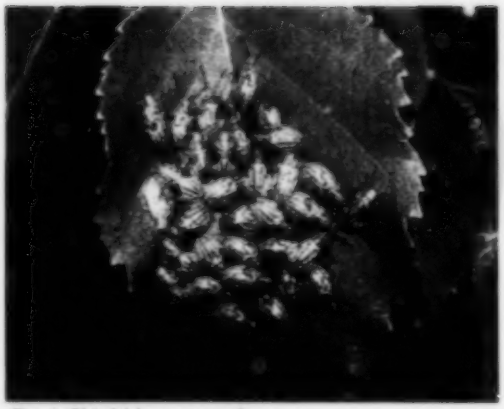

Fig.1 Shield bug nymphs.

Photo Credit E. Taylor

Fig. 2 Yellow garden spider.

Photo credit W. Butler

Yellow Garden Spider

Jacqui Gordon

This spider usually causes a stir in the late summer when it becomes full grown. It is also known as a Writing Spider because of the zig-zag pattern in the centre of its circle-shaped web.

It hangs out in gardens during the day, waiting for its insect prey to drop in as lunch.

Although they are considered by most literature to be harmless to humans, handling them is not recommended as they can bite.

When All Hail Breaks Loose

Jacqui Gordon

On 13 July, I was enjoying a day at home in Truro when the sky suddenly darkened. It started to hail . . . just small stones, nothing to worry about. Then the hail got larger and louder. After what seemed like a very long time but was really only a few minutes, it stopped. Large marble-sized hailstones covered the lawn and the deck. Some of the neighbours' cars were damaged.

This was an isolated storm. Forest Health has not received any calls concerning hail damage, which can show up as wounds/scars on tree stems, branches, or leaves with no associated cause.

(PS my plants came through mostly unscathed!)

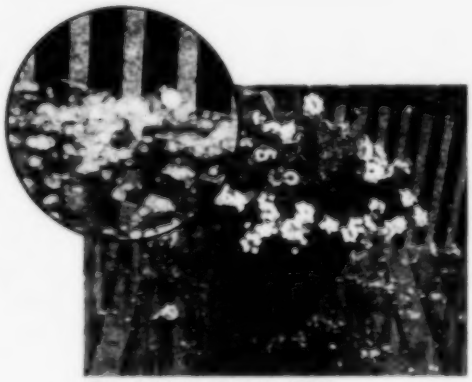

Fig. 3 Hail, 13 July 2009.

Photo credit J. Gordon

THE LAST LAUGH ...

A taxi passenger tapped the driver on the shoulder to ask him a question. The driver screamed, lost control of the car, nearly hit a bus, went up on the footpath, and stopped just inches from a shop window.

For a second everything went quiet in the cab, then the driver said, "Look Mac, don't ever do that again. You scared the daylights out of me!"

The passenger apologized and said he didn't realize that a little tap could scare him so much.

The driver replied, "Sorry, it's not really your fault. Today is my first day as a cab driver . . . I've been driving a hearse for the last 25 years!"

Q: How did you find the weather on your vacation?

A: I just went outside and there it was.

There was an engineer who had an exceptional gift for fixing all things mechanical. After serving his company loyally for more than 30 years, he happily retired.

Several years later, the company contacted him regarding a seemingly impossible problem they were having with one of their multimillion dollar machines. They had tried everything and everyone to get the machine fixed, but to no avail. In desperation, they called on the retired engineer who had solved so many of their problems in the past.

The engineer reluctantly took the challenge. He spent a day studying the huge machine. At the end of the day, he marked a small "x" in chalk on a particular component of the machine and proudly stated, "This is where your problem is."

The part was replaced and the machine worked perfectly again. The company received a bill for $50,000 from the engineer for his services. They demanded an itemized accounting of his charges.

The engineer responded:

One chalk mark $1

Knowing where to put it $49,999

Top Ten Reasons Hurricane Season is Like Christmas

10. Decorating the house (boarding up windows).
9. Dragging out boxes that haven't been used since last season (camping gear, flashlights).
8. Last minute shopping in crowded stores.
7. Regular TV shows pre-empted for "specials."
6. Family coming to stay with you.
5. Family and friends calling from away.
4. Buying food you don't normally buy . . . and in large quantities.
3. Days off from work.
2. Candles.

And the number one reason Hurricane Season is like Christmas . . .

At some point you know you're going to have a tree in your house!